

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 043 061

CG 005 837

AUTHOR Breivogel, William F.; And Others
TITLE The Florida Parent Education Model as an Agent of Change.
INSTITUTION American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.; Florida Univ., Gainesville. Inst. for Development of Human Resources.
PUB DATE 3 Sep 70
NOTE 2nd.; Paper presented at the American Psychological Association Convention in Miami Beach, Florida, September 3-8, 1970
EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.25 HC-\$1.55
DESCRIPTORS Culturally Disadvantaged, *Disadvantaged Youth, *Economically Disadvantaged, Educational Experience, Educational Improvement, *Educational Innovation, Educationally Disadvantaged, *Paraprofessional School Personnel, Parent Education, Parent Participation, *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

Four papers comprised this symposium report, the purpose of which was to explicate the effectiveness of the Florida Parent Education Follow Through Model, which has as its focus economically deprived, educationally divergent children. This program involves the use of paraprofessionals (called parent educators) who are indigenous to the neighborhoods which they serve: (1) to act as classroom aides; (2) to make frequent home visits; (3) to teach mothers learning tasks which they, in turn, teach their children; and (4) to serve as communication link between home and school. The first paper discussed a multi-dimensional Home Environment Review (HER) which is a new instrument for measuring those aspects of the home environment which are amenable to change and are school related. Plans for its use include: (1) evaluating the Florida Parent Education Program (FPEP); and (2) developing tasks to be brought into the home by parent educators. The other papers discuss the FPEP's impact on the school, the community and the sponsoring university. One of the important findings is the need for a basic change in teacher education. The final paper elaborates on the University of Florida's innovative Teacher Corps Program, a two year Masters program aimed at preparing teachers for educationally divergent children. (TL)

ED043061

**THE FLORIDA PARENT EDUCATION MODEL
AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE**

**Institute for Development of Human Resources
College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32601**

**Symposium presented at The American
Psychological Association Meeting in
Miami Beach, Florida. September 3, 1970**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION
& WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR
ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF
VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY
REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION
POSITION OR POLICY**

THE FLORIDA PARENT EDUCATION MODEL AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE
A Symposium Presented at the Seventy-Eighth Annual Convention
of the
American Psychological Association
Miami Beach, Florida
September 3, 1970

Chairman: Dr. William F. Breivogel*
(Dr. I. J. Gordon, Sponsor*)

Participants: Dr. Malcolm Garber*
Title: Impact on the Home Environment

Dr. Gordon E. Greenwood*
Mrs. Patricia P. Olmsted*
Title: Impact on the Schools

Dr. John Newell*
Mr. Russell O. Alderman**
Title: Impact on the Community

Dr. Leonard Kaplan*
Title: Impact on the Sponsoring University

Discussants: Mr. David L. Williams, Jr.*

Dr. T. Salvatore Tocco***

* Institute for Development of Human Resources, College of Education,
University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32601

~~*****~~
*** College of Education, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida

The Florida Parent Education Model as an Agent of Change

Summary

William F. Breivogel

A major thrust of psychological research in the last five to ten years has been the study and observation of the life of the economically deprived community. Through various federal grants to public school systems, which in turn have been subcontracted to universities, and through grants made directly to schools of education, the economically deprived segment of the community has become a major area of investigation for researchers in psychology.

At the University of Florida the Institute for Development of Human Resources, under the direction of Ira J. Gordon, has been deeply involved in investigating the home environment of the economically deprived child. Beginning with the "Early Child Stimulation Through Parent Education" project, which was concerned with the mother's influence on the cognitive development of the child (three-to twenty-four months), the investigations have been extended to preschool children (three- to four-year-olds) in Backyard Centers, and to those children who enter kindergarten and/or first grade in federally sponsored programs called Follow Through.

The major concern of the papers in this symposium is on the influence of the Florida Parent Education Follow Through Model on teachers and paraprofessionals (parent educators). The influence of the Florida Model Follow Through teachers and parent educators on the economically deprived mother and child in the home environment is the major focus of research. In addition, the impact of this program on the school, on the community at large, and on the teacher-training program of the sponsoring university will also be discussed.

**The Florida Parent Education Model as an Agent of Change:
Impact on the Home Environment**

Malcolm Garber

The Home Environment Review (HER) is a new instrument which measures the pupil's home environment. It measures those aspects of the home environment (a) which are amenable to change and (b) which are related to a child's school success.

Garber and Ware (1970) examined the relationship between measures of the home environment and measures of intelligences. They found that the HER did account for more than 17 per cent of the variance in concurrent measures of intelligence on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Garber and Graves (1970) have found that a very accurate discrimination of social class could be made on the basis of profiles derived from the nine HER measures. Both of these findings were obtained from a study in one small midwestern town on over a hundred essentially Caucasian six-year-old boys and girls. Though more information about how well the HER predicts measures of intelligence, school achievement, and social class is necessary, a guarded statement about measures of the home environment being related to measures of school success can be made.

Other investigators using different measures of environmental process characteristics have also found relationships between their measures of the home environment and school success. Studies of the home environment have been conducted by Wolf (1964), aDave (1964), Henderson (1967) and Garber (1968). Wolf developed a technique for studying environment in the home setting which could predict IQ test scores. Using thirteen Environment

Process Characteristics (EPC) scales which defined three Environmental Process Variables (EPV), Wolf was able to predict the IQ's of fifth graders in a selected school district. Dave was similarly successful in predicting school achievement on the basis of EPC measures. With these measures modified slightly, Henderson successfully differentiated first grade children of Mexican-American origin who scored either high or low on IQ tests. Garber was able to successfully predict the ethnic background of rural Spanish American, Navajo and Pueblo first graders on the basis of their parents' responses to an EOC questionnaire.

The HER is a similar instrument to those employed in the aforementioned studies. It is a questionnaire and rating schedule designed to be administered and scored by parent educators.

The HER has nine sections, each of which is divided into two parts. Part one is a questionnaire and part two is a rating scale. The parent educator first asks the parent the questions and records the parent's answers in the home. Then, upon leaving the home, the parent educator rates these responses from a low score of 1 to a high score of 5. Nine ratings are made. It is possible that it will predict social class, ethnic background and intelligence scores among a wide range of divergent children in this country. Currently, data is being collected on a large sample of culturally divergent children. At this point, however, there is only a strong suspicion that the HER is related to school success.

There is no research data available to indicate that by manipulating one or many of the HER variables a discernable difference in achievement takes place. Gathering such data would necessitate developing control groups for

comparisons. The expense of such research may prove prohibitive. Nevertheless, research indicating the intervention effects of manipulating HER variables could produce valuable information.

Gordon (1968) has developed the Florida Parent Education Follow Through Model, a program which involves parent education in the home. Though the explicit objectives of his program do not involve manipulation of HER variables, it is possible there may be changes in the home environment measures as a result of his program. The model developed by Gordon employs paraprofessionals (parent educators) who enter homes with tasks which are taught to parents who in turn teach these tasks to their children. These parent educators who enter the home each week could bring tasks which alter any given dimension of the home environment, at least as the home environment is measured by the HER. There are nine dimensions which the HER measures. They are:

1. Expectations for Child's Schooling
2. Awareness of Child's Development
3. Rewards for Intellectual Attainment
4. Press for Language Development
5. Availability and Use of Supplies for Language Development
6. Learning Opportunities Outside the Home
7. Materials for Learning in the Home
8. Reading Process
9. Trust in School

The parents' "Expectations for the Child's Schooling" may be increased by the parent educator. She can bring the parent information about the success of her child in school. Such information may serve as a basis for realistically expecting that the child can and should proceed through school.

Parent educators may also bring tasks into the home which are designed to encourage systematic techniques for letting the child know when he has accomplished whatever it is he has set out to learn. Similarly, tasks

which allow parents to "Press for Language Development" can be brought home. The importance of a dictionary, books, magazines and newspaper can be stressed. Parents can be encouraged to purchase as well as use them and, where this is too great a financial strain, school people can assist parents in obtaining reading materials. Parents can soon develop techniques for providing "Learning Opportunities Outside the Home." For example, parents can plan to show children why one store in the community is better than another. These parents can even use appliances and other household items as "Materials for Learning in the Home." Such parents might even take their children to libraries, buy their children books, read to their children, and in general apply a "Reading Press." The parents' "Trust in School" can be increased as the parent educator proves every time she visits that she, as a representative of the school, is concerned about the development of the child's individual competence. When it becomes clear to the mother that the parent educator is actively engaged in helping the child learn, "Trust in the School" can be fostered.

In this way, the parent educator can effect changes in the home environment. These changes may be measured with the Home Environment Review. This instrument, then, may be useful in two ways. First, it may be a useful evaluative technique with which to record changes in the home. Plans to evaluate the Florida Parent Education Program with the HER have been made. Parent educators will take this instrument into the homes when school begins this fall and again at the end of school next spring. Some control classes may be used.

Second, the HER will be used as a basis for developing tasks to be brought into the home by paraprofessional parent educators. The instrument

seems to have prescriptive relevance because it may be used as a source for task development and because the HER dimensions are amenable to change by school people.

The home is one link in the teaching-learning network that can have considerable effect on the way the child behaves and learns in school. The HER is an instrument which examines home variables which may be manipulated to effect change in the child's school performance. Though it is still too early to make any evaluative statements, the Florida Parent Education Program may be an intervention device which will change the Home Environment in such a way as to increase the child's competence in school. This program which requires that mothers teach their own children may clearly demonstrate differences in the home environment. What is even more important, this program may demonstrate increased competence in children.

The crucial difference in emphasis between traditional early primary grade school programs and the Florida Parent Education Program has been the shifting of teaching responsibility from the classroom back into the home. Hopefully, the change of emphasis will benefit the child. The HER may serve as one source for both instituting and evaluating this change.

The Florida Parent Education Model as an Agent of Change: Impact on the School

Gordon E. Greenwood and Patricia P. Olmsted

The Florida Follow Through Model is beginning its third year of operation and is presently functioning in eleven communities in ten different states. During this time it has been apparent that changes are occurring in Florida Model classrooms and schools. It is the purpose of this paper to discuss some of these changes, especially those in the organization of the classroom, the role of the teacher, the openness of the schools, and the relationship of the school to the home. First, in order to lay a foundation for later remarks, an attempt will be made to describe the nature of the Florida Follow Through Model in the classroom and the school.

The main thrust of the Florida Model is parent education. Mothers from low income families are trained to act as aides in the classroom and to visit the homes of Follow Through children usually once a week. These aides are called parent educators since their home visits involve teaching the mother a learning task which the mother later teaches to her child. The parent educator also serves as a communication link between the home and the school.

In the classroom the parent educator has more responsibilities and a wider range of duties than does the traditional classroom aide. She builds home learning tasks with the teacher, gathers data on the children and the classroom, and teaches individuals and small groups. In short, she does nearly everything that the teacher does. However, all of the activities of the parent educator are under the supervision of the teacher and result from mutual planning with her. The teacher is the ultimate

decision-maker in the classroom and is responsible for the activities therein. Of course, the idea is for the teacher and her parent educators (usually two) to function as a team.

Changes in the Classroom

It should be obvious from the job description of the parent educator given above that the Florida Model has changed the organization of the classrooms that it has entered. There is no longer one teacher and thirty children in a room, but three teaching adults and thirty children. It is a much more common sight now than in the past to see small groups or individual children working with an adult.

In addition, the role of the teacher has changed. She now has responsibilities as a supervisor of two parent educators which require different skills than she usually has to employ in the classroom. She now has to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each parent educator and jointly plan classroom activities with them. She has to help the parent educators learn teaching skills and decide when to give them more responsibilities as they gain experience. Even though these additional responsibilities demand extra time and energy on the part of the teachers, most of them seem to feel that the benefits of the model outweigh the extra time and energy required.

Another change which has occurred in Follow Through classrooms is an increase in the number of parent volunteers. During home visits parent educators have tried to increase the knowledge and interest of the parents regarding what goes on in the classroom. They have also tried to communicate to the parents that they are welcome in the classroom. In fact, parents are often specifically asked to visit the classroom to see what is going on. Many Follow Through parents, after visiting once or twice, become regular

volunteers and assume a regular role in the classroom. Two of the reasons why Follow Through parents are more willing to visit the classroom are: (1) they have been openly invited; (2) they know that the parent educator who visits them every week will be there.

One parent who had only occasionally visited the school before her child entered Follow Through kept hearing about the electric typewriter in the classroom from her son. She thought he was making it up and asked the parent educator about it during the next home visit. The parent educator assured the mother that there was indeed a typewriter in the classroom and invited the mother to school to see it and to watch her child work with it. Shortly thereafter the mother appeared at the door of the room. She became quite excited about all of the things going on in the classroom and stayed for nearly an hour. She returned again and again and has now become a regular volunteer in the room. A final note, the child was really excited to see his mother visit the room and gave her an exhibition of his typing skills.

The increase in parent volunteers has resulted in a number of ingenious ideas on the part of the teacher to make the experience beneficial for all involved. One teacher lists volunteer jobs on a board near the door and when a parent arrives, she may choose the one she wishes. Another teacher keeps materials ready and shifts her activities if volunteers arrive. For example, she might shift to finger painting for a short period of time since there are several adults present to supervise.

Some of the teacher hold informal get-togethers for parents who wish to volunteer. One teacher explains different ways that parents can be helpful in the classroom and discusses with each one the type of activities in which they would be most interested. She then works out a schedule of participation with them.

Among the changes observed in Florida Model classrooms by monthly consultants and recorded in consultant reports are:

- (1) an increase in the number of activities going on at one time
- (2) an increase in the number of parent volunteers
- (3) an increase in the amount of pupil involvement and activity

Changes in the Schools

Not only have changes occurred in classrooms, but changes have also occurred in the schools which contain them. For one thing, the schools seem more open now. One sees more parents there, visiting in the classrooms, visiting the principal or meeting other parents to discuss Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) business. The PAC consists of Follow Through parents and acts as a decision-making body for the program. Some schools now have a parents' room where parents can stay and have a cup of coffee and talk after bringing their children to school or meet to discuss plans for a field trip or hear a guest speaker or even help prepare materials for a particular classroom activity. Some Florida Model schools have indeed become places for parents as well as children.

As a result of such parent contact, changes in the attitude and behavior of Follow Through parents toward the school have been observed. In general, a positive change in parental attitude toward the school is evidenced by such behavior as increased visits to the classroom, more volunteering in the classroom, and increased involvement in PAC and school activities. At least part of this change is due to the fact that communication between the school and home takes place on a regular basis and not only when something is wrong.

A number of other changes have taken place both inside and outside Florida model schools. For example, one school is now using its buses as

a means of transporting families from Follow Through neighborhoods to a library located a fair distance away. Once a week the bus drives through the neighborhood, picks up mothers and children, and takes them to the library for a few hours. It is reported that there is usually a full bus each time.

Another school approached the library problem a different way. The parents and faculty fought a long battle with the local school system to keep their school library open during certain weekday afternoons and evenings. They finally won and feel very good about it. The families in the community are reportedly making good use of the library.

In another community it was observed that the parents were making very little use of the local public library. The parent educators discovered that the parents felt uncomfortable in the library because they didn't know how to find things when they were there. Consequently, several home learning tasks were developed by teachers and parent educators which asked parents to go to the library with their children and help them find different kinds of information. The early tasks asked for information which could very easily be located, while later tasks required a greater amount of searching and the use of reference materials. The parents reacted positively to these tasks and seemed to enjoy them. It is not yet known whether there has been an increase in library use by the parents, but it is known that many of them are better able to utilize the facilities of the library.

Another thing that Florida Model schools have done is to try to arrange field trips at times when many parents will be able to attend along with their children. Many of the parents have never been to any of the places visited. One school arranges two separate field trips to

each place visited: one for the parents, and a few days later, one for the children. In this way, both the parent and the child have had similar experiences and are able to discuss them.

One other extremely significant change should be mentioned: the increase in requests from the parents for more social gatherings with the teachers, principals, and parent educators. They are interested in gatherings such as pot luck suppers, picnics, etc. The parents say they enjoy meeting teachers and principals in this way so they can get to know them better. When events such as these have been held, the turnout has often been far beyond expectations. In one community the school supplied hot dogs for a picnic while the parents provided the salads, desserts, etc. They ran out of hot dogs very quickly and had to replenish the supply. More than twice as many people attended than were expected.

While other examples of "unobtrusive data" could be gleaned from consultant reports, interviews with local Follow Through personnel, and the personal observations of consultants, perhaps the above examples are enough to indicate some of the ways in which the Florida Model has effected change in the school and in the classroom. Of course, all the changes reported in this paper are not occurring in all Follow Through schools. However, enough change has been observed that we are willing to predict that when the "hard data" has finally been analyzed, it will indicate that the Florida Follow Through Model is acting as an effective and positive agent of change.

**The Florida Parent Education Model as an Agent of Change:
Impact on the Community**

by
John M. Newell*

and

Russell O. Alderman**

The receipt of information that a research grant has been awarded to a community is a signal for a series of events to occur in recognition of the rewarding of that grant. The appropriate member of congress will typically issue a news release describing the amount and nature of the grant, the superintendent of schools or his representative will provide additional information concerning the importance of the grant for the community and particularly the school system, and the local news media will describe the essential elements of the award to the community at large. Within the school system the impact is also felt. There may be some additional monies associated with the grant that will provide support previously lacking. The curriculum may undergo modifications and the influx of additional materials and books is welcomed by most if not all of those involved. But what impact does this series of events have on the community beyond a rather general feeling that there may be extra money in the school budget or that certain programs such as hot lunches or extra field trips can now be provided? In many cases, no matter how well conceived the research program, it will have little effect on the community because the program is not designed to involve the community in any real sense.

* Dr. John M. Newell is Associate Professor of Education and member of the IDHR at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

** Mr. Russell Alderman is Superintendent of Duval County Public Schools.

The purpose of this paper is to review some of the effects that the Florida Parent Education Model has had on the eleven communities associated with the program. The basic elements of the Florida Model have been presented previously and only those elements which relate directly to community impact will be mentioned here. The Florida Parent Education Model focuses on the role of the parent educator in both the home and the school. Since the parent educators are drawn, in large part, from the specific neighborhood or district in which they will work, this program is, in a very real sense, a "grass roots" program. Let us consider very quickly some of the characteristics of the parent educator which relate to community impact. The parent educator is typically a female who has not enjoyed a stable work experience in the past. Her lack of specific skills and education has placed her in the position of being unable to compete successfully for many jobs. The parent educator may be the sole source of financial support for her family and as a result may be the recipient of welfare payments. In many cases she has exhibited some interest or commitment to community activities and it has been this interest or commitment that may have brought her to the attention of those seeking applicants for parent educators. As was indicated previously, the parent educator often lives in the specific neighborhood in which she will work and is known to her neighbors. When she becomes a parent educator, a number of things happen which not only affect her life but have an impact on the neighborhood in which she lives. First, she is now in a stable work situation earning a small but steady salary. As a result of this, she is no longer drawing welfare payments. Second, she now becomes a visible representative of the school system which previously has not been regarded highly by others in the neighborhood. In short, the parent educator now becomes a "model of behavior" for others in the community.

Because the parent educator serves in both the home and school, she is in the position of being an important liaison or link between the school system and those in the community served by that school system. It has been pointed out by a number of parents in a variety of ways that, for all practical purposes, the parent educator IS the school system as she is the most visible representative of that school system. The parents in a neighborhood may or may not know the name of the superintendent of schools, they may know the name of the teacher of their child and perhaps the name of the building principal. It is only rarely that these parents come into any direct contact with any of the above official representatives of the school. Such contacts are often negative in nature as the parent is called to school because of some misdeed performed by their child. The parent educator provides quite a different type of relationship with the school and for many parents represents one of the first really positive experiences that they have had with an educational system. Furthermore, since the parent educator is "one of them" in the sense that she comes from the same neighborhood, her interpretation of the role and goals of the school system is in terms of what is most relevant to the neighborhood. What evidence is there that this liaison role of the parent educator has any real impact on the parents and particularly on the neighborhood? The data that is available is unobtrusive in nature and is in the form of reports by parent educators as well as others in responsible community positions.

First, teachers and principals have reported significant increases in the number and frequency of visits to the classrooms by parents of children associated with Follow Through. That is, the parent educator, through her contacts with the home, has not only invited parents to visit the schools and to take part in the formal parent meetings such as PTA, but she has

worked on a more individual basis to encourage mothers to visit and to volunteer their time in the various classrooms. Overall, the expression by the parent educator to the mother has been, "Why don't you come to school and see what your child is doing and what type of educational program is being offered?" Response was initially spotty and it has taken almost two years in some cases to overcome the rather strong negative reactions that some parents have about education and the schools in particular. For some mothers, it represents the first time that they have visited school for positive reasons. It may be of some interest to indicate that a large number of the parent educators that were added to staff the expansion of the Follow Through program were drawn from mothers who initially came to visit and then to provide volunteer services to the school.

Second, the parent educator has been an important source of information about what is being done in the schools. Information or rumors about changes in school policy, shifts in students due to integration or changes in the school day are received by parents and it is to the parent educator that they turn for confirmation or explanation. The decrease in the time lag in communicating to the parents changes in the school program has prevented incidents which might have been disruptive to the operation of the schools. For example, in one instance an enterprising salesman was telling parents that their child would be severely handicapped unless they purchased some educational materials which he was selling. It was the weekly contact with parents in the homes by parent educators that first brought this to the attention of the school system and correct information was provided.

Third, the parent educator becomes involved in the educational program in the schools and is often one of the first in the neighborhood to recognize the need for additional education. Many of the parent educators have

obtained additional training and formal education because they have felt the need for this training to improve their performance as a parent educator. This attitude toward education is reflected by their activities in the community. Parent educators have taken the initiative in encouraging parents to seek additional education and have provided specific information as to where such educational opportunities could be obtained. In some cases, when educational opportunities were not readily available to parents because of difficulties in transportation, parent educators were able to arrange for classes to be held in the housing development or in some nearby facility which made it possible for parents to participate.

Fourth, the Follow Through program has as a part of the total program a Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) which is designed to reflect the needs and aspirations of the community served by the schools. Like any group, the greater the participation by members of the community the more likely it will adequately reflect the needs and feelings of that community. In the past parents of Follow Through children have not been in a position of seeing themselves as being involved in any such decision-making role such as the PAC. At the present time, parent involvement in the PAC is spotty and limited. The parent educator has been working with parents to encourage greater participation but this aspect of the program is far from satisfactory. While there are many understandable reasons for the lack of participation, the fact remains that community involvement at the policy advisory level for the schools is weak and is sometimes dominated by a particular group with particular needs and goals that may not be representative of the community.

I should like to return to one aspect of the role of the parent educator and to examine it more closely. This is their role in seeking additional educational opportunities not only for themselves but for

presentation of the parent educator was a person lacking in skills that could be offered on the job market. For many of us associated with the program, it is with mixed feelings that we see some of our most dedicated and competent parent educators leave the program. These parent educators have returned to school and learned to be secretaries or hair stylists and have now moved out of the parent educator role and into the job of secretary or hairdresser. While the loss to the Follow Through program is regrettable, the opportunity for these parent educators to become trained in a stable job with a future provides a dramatic example of what is meant by breaking the poverty cycle. Many of these parent educators only two or three years ago were subsisting on welfare payments with little expectation that their future would be much changed. Although the impact may seem small, it should be indicated that the parent educator program has removed some two hundred women from the welfare rolls by providing them jobs as parent educators. There is evidence that the majority of these women will not return to the welfare rolls in the future. In only two instances that we know of has a parent educator pursued a career in teaching. Since many parent educators do not possess more than a high school diploma and are responsible for the support of their family, it is understandable that the goal of becoming a certified teacher may seem to be too difficult a road to pursue.

The parent education model has also had an impact on the school system. In many of the communities associated with the Florida Model, the position of teacher aide has been included in the jobs offered by the school. While many of the duties of the parent educator parallel those of the teacher aide, the assistance given to the teacher in small group work in the classroom as well as the contact with parents in the community distinguishes the job description of parent educator from that of teacher aide.

In two communities, the administration of the school system has added the job designation of parent educator to their job description listings and service as a teacher aide is listed as a prerequisite for becoming a parent educator. The teachers who have had parent educators in the classroom have learned new roles as instructional supervisors and have found opportunities to use the parent educator as a liaison between parent and teacher. One of the most dramatic results of this inclusion of the parent educator in the job designations of school personnel has been the introduction of parent educators into classrooms not associated with Follow Through. This means that the school system must underwrite the salaries for these parent educators but there has been a demand for parent educators by teachers. In one community, the parent educators are working with a large number of middle-class parents and continue to provide a linkage between parents and the school. This use of parent educators with middle-class parents is presented to illustrate that their role is not restricted to work with the disadvantaged community but can become an integral part of any school system.

Regardless of the successes experienced by any program, there are also problems and questions to be raised. Probably the most critical question to be raised concerning the relationship between the Florida Model and the community is how much authority the community should have in determining the school program. Questions have been raised as to whether or not the parent educator is really representing the middle-class conception and values about education and may not be reflecting the needs of the neighborhood or community. This is obviously a serious question and a difficult one to answer. The staff members of the Institute for

Development of Human Resources have all experienced some rather interesting changes in their beliefs and attitudes about the role of the educational system in a community. In visits with the parent educators to the homes in the eleven communities we have had experiences and have heard parents express ideas about the role of education that we had never considered. There is little doubt in my mind that the effect of the parent education program on the community is in the direction of greater respect for and value of education. At the same time, the parent educators and the parents in the community have shaped our own conception of what is relevant in an educational program. After two years of work in such a program, it is indeed difficult to remember how one viewed education two years ago. The process of change has been gradual but steady and both the community and those at the University of Florida have changed our views.

If the overall goal of the parent education program or any other research grant is to have a significant impact on the poverty cycle in a community, then the information that is presently available provides hope that for some the cycle has been broken and that things will never be the same again. The long range effect of this on the community and its relationship to education as well as in areas such as job opportunities, welfare programs and general community participation cannot be determined at this time.

**The Florida Parent Education Model as an Agent of Change:
Impact on the Sponsoring University**

**Leonard Kaplan
University of Florida**

and

**T. Salvatore Tocco
University of South Florida**

Introduction

The major thrust of Project Follow Through is the advancement of educationally divergent children. A variety of services are made available to Follow Through children and their families. Medical, dental, nutritional, psychological, and instructional services are deemed necessary and important in the struggle against educational deprivation.

Change in the basic patterns of teacher education is clearly needed if this nation is to solve its social, educational and personal economic difficulties. Change in the direction of increased understanding and knowledge of deprived children and parents must clearly emerge as an important aim of the Follow Through Program.

Institutional Change

An important secondary aim of Follow Through is institutional change. The Florida Parent Education Follow Through Model has fostered institutional change at the University of Florida in two important ways. First, College of Education professors who are actively engaged in the daily operation of the model have gained insights into the problems of disadvantaged children and

parents. They have brought this understanding to bear upon their own instructional content and methodology. On numerous occasions students have reported an increased relevance of their professional education courses largely as a function of increased professorial involvement in on-site work with disadvantaged people. Clearly, this trend is desirable and continuation of it will be actively sought by all concerned with Florida Model Follow Through. Second, the University of Florida has developed and had approved by the Florida State Department of Education a two-year innovative program in education leading to a masters degree in elementary education with a specialty in early childhood education. This program is aimed at preparing teachers for the educationally divergent child. It is safe to say that this program would not have been proposed or accepted had not the Florida Follow Through Model been in operation.

Teacher Corps Rationale and Objectives

This program will initially involve twenty-seven Teacher Corpsmen working in Jacksonville Florida Model schools. Much of the corpsmen's time will be spent in implementing the home component of the Florida Parent Education Model.

Many of the objectives and much of the rationale underlying the Teacher Corps program were derived from its Florida Parent Education Model foundation.

Program Summary

The proposed National Teacher Corps Program at the University of Florida will be a two-year Master of Education program for liberal arts graduates who enroll to become competent teachers of disadvantaged children. Basically, the program will emphasize university study toward certification and a degree; service to poverty children and their families in the community, either as school extended or neighborhood centered service. We believe the Teacher Corps program should be structured to provide educational experiences which promote growth, not only for children and corpsmen, but also parents, the community, school personnel, and University faculty.

Recent demographic studies show that the vast majority of our population live in the urban setting. The majority of teachers are employed in the cities, and a considerable number teach in the inner-city situation.

Observation of teacher-training institutions, especially in non-metropolitan universities, suggests that:

1. Teachers of inner-city children are inadequately prepared.
The assumption that educating for teaching the city child is the same as for any other child is, in today's world, unsound.
2. Teachers have historically been prepared to look at the method rather than the conceptual development of content. This has led them to be victims of bandwagon pressures instead of providing them with the intellectual tools for decision-making.
3. Teachers are poorly prepared to understand and use the environmental forces which affect children. For years education has talked of a closer home-school relationship, and yet school

people know little about the educational and social values of the home, and ways to work effectively with parents.

4. Teachers are unprepared to work with paraprofessionals. The use of non-certified personnel in the classroom is becoming more and more commonplace. Teachers must know how to make effective use of other classroom personnel.
5. Teachers are unprepared to work with parents in a joint effort at modification of the school as an institution in constructive ways.

Therefore, we propose to build on the Florida Follow Through Model a new approach to teacher education so that teachers coming from this program can:

1. teach inner-city children effectively,
2. think for themselves in curriculum and instructional development,
3. work with parents and other community agencies to strengthen the learning environment of the child,
4. work with paraprofessionals, and
5. cooperate competently with parents and others in institutional change.

The traditional focus has been upon the self-contained classroom with one adult, the teacher, present. In order to implement the objectives stated on page 1, a new graduate program in teacher education will be developed.

The first academic quarter (September-December) the corpsmen will be on campus full-time, learning, in an integrated fashion, child growth and

development theory, the derivation of curriculum from the above, systematic observation procedures, and home intervention strategies. There will be field work to accompany the class laboratory work. The second and third quarters they will be assigned to the Follow Through teams. They will make home visits systematically with parent educators, work with individual children, construct learning activities and serve in all phases of the program. All but the corpsmen will already have been trained or be in training via the Florida Follow Through Model. Corpsmen will receive seven distinct types of education not now required in most teacher education courses:

1. There will be a heavy emphasis on the disadvantaged child and parent. The total educational ecology of the impoverished area will be stressed. A major objective is the development of sound educational strategies based upon past Florida Model Follow Through experiences coupled with increased knowledge and understanding of the disadvantaged child and his educational environment.
2. The corpsmen will work in disadvantaged schools to a greater extent than is now provided for by existing internship programs. This person-to-person contact with disadvantaged children in the classroom is considered to be a way to implement the generalized objective stated above.
3. Corpsmen will work with paraprofessional parent educators as they actively intervene in the home. Corpsmen will be presented with many opportunities to interact with disadvantaged parents and professionals.

4. Each corpsman will be thoroughly trained in the theory and use of systematic observation of classroom behavior. He will then bring these observational skills to bear upon the development of educational strategies for individual children.
5. Corpsmen will receive their academic preparation pre-service and in-service from a substantive panel of specialists. Areas offered will meet State certification requirements. There will be no courses in this program as is the case in most programs.
6. Corpsmen will receive intensive work in the areas of reading and language development. This pre-service and in-service work will emanate from the College of Education's Reading Clinic and will be administered by training specialists in this field.
7. Differentiated staffing will be the organizational plan used by the in-service program. All personnel will be trained in the ramifications of this program.

Statement of Objectives

We believe that the development of the Teacher Corps Program based on and using the Florida Follow Through Model will strengthen the educational situation for the inner-city child and his family by:

1. changing the way we presently educate teachers,
2. increasing the contact between universities and the parents of school children so that both learn from each other,
3. building better communication between home and school, school and university,
4. upgrading the skills of present teachers,

5. developing materials that can be used in the preparation of professionals, as well as paraprofessional personnel,
6. preparing parent educators to work effectively in homes, as well as in classrooms,
7. expanding the present Florida Follow Through Model in Jacksonville, and
8. continuing the program of differentiated staffing already present in the Jacksonville Public Schools.

We intend, therefore, to modify our present graduate program in elementary education to provide the above opportunities.

In summary, the Florida Parent Education Follow Through Model has promoted basic institutional change in two ways. First, professors are bringing to bear increased knowledge and understanding on their instructional content and format. Second, the University has displayed an unusual willingness to accept an innovative program based on home intervention as a vehicle for the awarding of its masters degree. Perhaps the decision to support the Follow Through Model will be remembered as a landmark decision with respect to institutional change at the University of Florida's College of Education.